THE

Dolgelley Urban District Council.

THE

ANNUAL - - - - REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

For the Year

1939

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TO THE DOLGELLEY URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Mr. Chairman, Mrs. Rees, and Gentlemen,—

I beg to submit my report upon the sanitary conditions of your district during the year 1939.

The Urban District of Dolgelley has an area of 1,127 acres. The resident population on the 29th September, 1939 (National Registration day) was 2,740. The number of inhabited houses (end of 1939) according to the rate books was 693. The rateable value at the same date was £9,630, and the sum represented by a penny rate was £36 9s. 0d.

The inhabitants are for the most part engaged in the ordinary occupation of an agricultural market town. The surrounding country is mountainous. The town lies at the bottom of a deep valley, rising on the steep southern slope of the valley, having therefore an aspect to the North. Immediately to the South, Cader Idris rises to a height of nearly 3,000 ft. Through the main valley the river Wnion runs, and this is joined by a smaller stream called the Arran, which comes down from Cader Idris through the town with a rapid descent.

VITAL STATISTICS.

	Total.	Male.	Female.
Live Births	36	15	21
Legitimate	35	15	20
Illegitimate	1	0	1
Still Births	3	0	3
Legitimate	2	0	2
Illegitimate	1	0	1

BIRTH RATE PER 1,000 OF POPULATION.

Total	14.53
Still birth rate	1.21

	Total.	Male.	Female.
Deaths	33	24	9

Deaths.

Death rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population 13.06.

There were no deaths in the area during the past year from diseases and accidents of pregnancy and child birth, including sepsis and other causes.

Infant mortality per 1,000 live births	0
Maternal mortality per 1000 live births	0
Maternal mortality per 1000 live and still births	0
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years) per 1000 live births	0

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES.

1 M.O.H. (part time); 1 Sanitary Inspector (certificated). Full time in conjunction with Dolgelley Rural District.

NURSING IN THE HOME.

There has been no change in the arrangements for (a) general nursing; (b) nursing of cases of infectious diseases.

PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA.

I am pleased to state that the Joint Ambulance Committee, representing the Dolgelley Rural and Urban Councils and the Barmouth Urban District Council, have ordered an ambulance van to serve the three areas, and have made arrangements for it to be stationed and serviced at Dolgelley, but unfortunately owing to the present crisis it is doubtful whether the necessary materials for its construction will be released.

Water Supply.

Water is supplied by a private company. In March there was some doubt as to the quality of the water. Samples were taken, and the results of the analysis were satisfactory, except for the plumbo solvent nature of the water.

Drainage and Sewerage.

The condition of the sewers during the past year has been good. During the greater part of the year an enormous volume of water from the surrounding mountains is turned into them, and they are thus effectively flushed.

I would again call the serious attention of the Local Authority to the objectionable method of dispersing of the sewerage of the district by discharging it in a crude state to the river Wnion.

Frequent complaints of an objectionable smell are received from the tenants and from employees of the Great Western Railway Company regarding the Sewage Disposal Works at Ardd Fawr. The matter is receiving attention.

Rivers and Streams.

There was no pollution of rivers and streams during the past year in this area beyond that produced by a few careless inhabitants who threw small quantities of some kind of waste material or rubbish in them at times. There is no excuse for this as the district is systematically scavenged three times every week. There are no large industries in the district to produce any material pollution.

Closet Accommodation.

The great majority of the houses have separate water closets with proper flushing apparotus.

Water Closets	508
Conservancy System	16

The dry closets are on the outskirts of the town, and their contents are disposed of in the gardens.

Public Cleansing.

Scavenging is done by contract, and the house refuse is collected three times a week by a motor lorry during the morning.

I have repeatedly called the attention of this Authority to the need of a cover for the lorry when in use.

The receptacles used by some of the inhabitants for storing the refuse at night outside their dwellings are altogether unsatisfactory. The old boxes, pails, hampers etc., at present seen in use are most objectionable. These receptacles should be made of galvanised iron with well fitting metallic covers to insure protection from the sun and air. A satisfactory solution of this problem will not be reached until the Local Authority provides and maintains standard ash-bins in place of the boxes, pails, etc., in common use.

The refuse is taken to a place about a mile outside the town along the Talyllyn Road, and tipped on the edge of the main road. There is still an attempt being made at controlled dumping, but the side of the dip sloping down to the river is still uncovered. The stench at times is objectionable, and during windy weather dust and the lighter articles are scattered around. The situation of the refuse heap on the roadside along which hosts of tourists and visitors travel is bad advertisement for the town.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA, 1939.

Total number of formal notices issued	4
number complied with	4
Total number of informal notices issued	7
number complied with	7
Total number of New Houses completed	
(a) by Local Sanitary Authority	0
(2) by private enterprise	1
Number of plans—new houses, buildings	1
Visits to Bakehouses	7
Number of Notices re Defects	0
Visits to Cowsheds	8
Number of Visits re Defects	1
Visits to Milk Shops	5
Number of Notices re Defects	0
Visits to Dairies	8
Number of Notices re Defects	0
Visits to Slaughter Houses	5

Number of Notices re Defects	0
Notices re Removal of Ashes	0
Notices re Removal of Manure	0
Notices re Defective Drains	2
Number of Visits to cases of Infectious Diseases	3
Number of Houses Disinfected	3
Notices of Defective Water Fittings	0
Number of Pail Closets converted into W.C.	0
Number of New Water Closets erected	0
TOTAL number of Water Closets	508
Pail Closets	0
Privies or Other Closets	16
number of Closets serving more than one house ...	14
Milk Samples taken for Ministry of Health—	
for County Council	4
for Local Sanitary Authority	0

Shops.

There was no action necessary during the year under the provisions of the Shops Act, 1934, relating to ventilation and temperature of shops and to sanitary conveniences.

Smoke Abatement.

There is no nuisance from smoke in this district, and no action was needed.

Eradiction of Bed Bugs.

No action was necessary during the past year.

Swimming Baths and Pools.

There are no public or privately owned swimming baths or pools open to the public.

Camping Sites.

There are about three sites (in this area) used for camping purposes on a small scale. No licences have been issued in respect of these sites.

Schools.

The co-operation of the School Medical Officer is always secured in dealing with any matters pertaining to the Schools and the scholars.

The Dolgelley Infants School was closed during the period 18th December to the 22nd December owing to the prevailance of measles.

HOUSING.

At the end of December, 1938, thirty houses were completed ready for occupation on the Ardd Fawr site. Unfortunately, owing to the delay in approval of plans, the Sewage Disposal Works to serve these Houses were not completed until September, 1939. War having broken out, the Ministry of Health

on the 19th September, 1939, issued Circular No. 1866, which provi[illegible] for the postponement of the Minister's confirmation of Clearance Orders and suspension of Government grants until the termination of hostilities.

Having regard to the contents of this Circular, the Council were compelled to let the houses at economic rents of 12/6 per week for the three-bedroom type and 10/- per week for the two-bedroom type plus rates, the houses being offered to tenants in the Clearance Areas in the first instanes at these rents. On the 26th September, 1939, the thirty houses were let, three families numbering sixteen persons from the Clearance Areas accepting the terms.

1. Inspection of Dwelling-houses during the Year:—

(1) (a) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) 20

(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose ... 30

(2) (a) Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 20

(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose ... 25

(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation 3

(4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation 10

2. Remedy of Defects during the Year without service of formal Notices:—

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers 0

3. Action under Statutory Powers during the Year:—

(a) Proceedings under Sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936:

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs 0

(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices—

(a) By owners 0

(b) By Local Authority in default of owners 0

(b) Proceedings under Public Health Acts:

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied 4

(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notice:—

(a) By owners 4

(b) By Local Authority in default of owners 0

(c) Proceedings under Sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936:

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made 0

(2) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders 0

(d) Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936:

(1) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made 0

(2) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit 0

4. Housing Act, 1936—Part IV.—Overcrowding:—

(a) (i.) Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year 27

(ii.) Number of families dwelling therein 31

(iii.) Number of persons dwelling therein 140

(b) Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year 0

(c) (i.) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year 1

(ii.) Number of persons concerned in such cases ... 6

(d) Particulars of any cases in which dwelling-houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding 0

(e) Any other particulars with respect to overcrowding upon which the Medical Officer of Health may consider it desirable to report 0

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Milk Supply.

Very little milk is produced within the area, and the bulk of it is imported from the immediate neighbourhood. The

cowsheds and dairies are periodically inspected. There is need for structural improvement in some of the cowsheds. The dairies and cowsheds are kept clean, and are periodically lime-washed.

No action was taken by this Authority during the year in regard to tuberculous milk or cattle.

There are four producers of Tuberculin Tested (Certified) Milk, who supply this area.

Meat.

The two small slaughter houses within the area were periodically inspected. They are kept clean, and are occasionally lime-washed, though one of them is not structurally up to modern standards. There are no public abattoirs within the area. It is now felt by our leaders in sanitary matters that small centres of population should combine to provide a fairly large public abattoir in some convenient place where all the slaughtering business of the surrounding districts can be carried out. Motor vehicles are now largely used for bringing cattle to market, and the same vehicles could be used to bring the animals to some central abattoir. This would immensely facilitate the work of meat inspection especially in sparsely populated districts.

No meat marketing has been done, and no stalls are used for the purpose of selling meat. The meat shops are kept clean, and their sanitary condition is good. The meat is not exposed to contamination by flies or other objectionable material. Several of the meat shops are provided with adequate 'cold storage.'

No meat was discovered during the past year which was considered unfit for human consumption.

Bakehouses.

These were inspected, and found to be clean and periodically lime-washed.

CHEMICAL AND BACTERIOLOGICAL EXAMINATION OF FOOD.

There was no need of this during the past year.

Shell-fish.

There are no shell-fish beds or layers in this area.

CANCER.

The death rate from cancer in this area during the past year was 2.77 per 1000 of the population. The total number of deaths was 7: 4 males and 3 females.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES (other than Tuberculosis) DURING THE YEAR 1939.

Disease.	Total Cases Notified.	Cases Admitted to Hospital.	Deaths.
Smallpox	0		0
Scarlet Fever	1		0
Diptheria	1		0
Enteric Fever (including Paratyphoid)	0	No Hospital Available.	0
Puerperal Fever	0		
Puerperal Pyrexia	0		0
Pneumonia	1		1
Erysipelas	0		0

There is nohospital for the isolation of infectious cases in this district or in the whle of Merioneth. Some such place should be provided, and also an apparatus for the disinfection of infested articles of clothing and bedding.

TUBERCULOSIS.

	New. Cases.				Deaths.			
	Resp.		Non-Resp.		Resp.		Non-Resp.	
Age Periods.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0								
1								
5		1						
15				1				
25				1				
35								
45								
55	1							
65 and upwards								
Totals	1	1		2				

Total Tuberculosis Death Rate ... 0

Total Phthisis Rate ... 0

The notification of this disease in the area is satisfactory.

In conclusion, I would like to express my appreciation of the assistance rendered to me during the past year by our Sanitary Inspector,—Mr. Tudor G. Evans.

I beg to remain,

Your obedient servant,

Gwyndy, Dolgelley.
3rd October, 1940.

R. W. EDWARDS,
B.Sc., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.